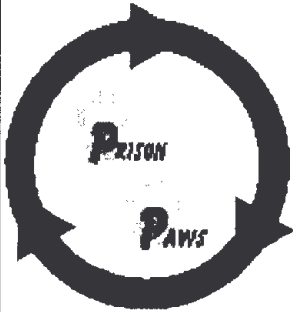


# Prison Paws for Humanity

## HARMONY COMMUNITY



The Prison Paws for Humanity Program at the Montana Women's Prison was founded in April 2004 by Warden Jo Acton in association with Debbi Bouwcamp and her organization, *Service Canines of Montana*. Its purpose is not only to provide rescued dogs with basic training and social skills to increase their adoptability, but also to offer more advanced training as agility, service, seizure alert, or guide

dogs. Dog owners may also bring their family pets to the program for basic command training.

Currently, five hours of class training are offered per week, with the majority of the training done on a one to one basis between the trainers and the dogs. One outside trainer is currently involved with Prison Paws, as well as Warden Acton, who is active in various canine activities.

There are 28 offenders cur-

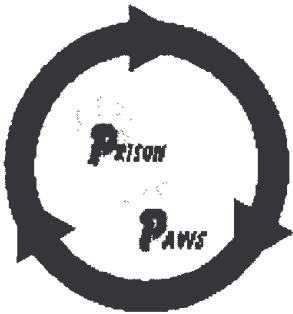
rently involved with Prison Paws For Humanity. The majority of these women work as teams of two, with one acting as lead trainer. The dogs live with their trainers and are with them during the day, many of them going to groups or classes. This allows the animals to become accustomed to, and behave appropriately in, many different social situations.



# Prison Paws for Humanity

Prison Paws was a dream of mine back in 2004. It actually started as an idea because Animal Planet carried a program called Cell Dogs. My step-son who is also incarcerated wanted me to try and contact the Warden in Wyoming and see if I could bring dogs in. But distance made that impossible.

I then contacted Jo Acton, an acquaintance thru our dogs; luckily the girls had been watching cell dogs on TV and had already approached her about a program. Thus Prison Paws for Humanity evolved.



**Deb Bouwkamp**  
Founder of  
Prison Paws for Humanity

Since quite a few of my girls have been paroled....and although I know that other factors were there, I would like to think that the dogs helped in some way. I have had 3 girls that have been with me from Day One. All of them will be or have been paroled already this year. Sad for me...Great for them!

I feel the program gives the girls a purpose to look forward, and not look back. To hopefully get some back ground in training dogs. We also give them experience in grooming dogs since they have to keep their dogs groomed. They get background in taking care of sick dogs or just learning to keep a dog well. We have also been called on to take in dogs in need of special care and attention. We have also had seminars in Canine Massage and Canine CPR, and Grooming.

After being the Program Director for 2 years, I am looking forward to starting our 3rd year in April. I have a few girls that will have been with me this last year, but quite a few new girls. And a number of excellent trainers are coming out of the group.

They are giving back to the outside whether it be in just training a rescued dog to give it a second chance at life, or training a dog for someone who has trouble with dropped objects, or opening a door such as Ellie's owner; or someone who suffers with seizures or someone who has trouble walking such as Sampson and Emma's owners; or someone who suffers from Agoraphobia, such as Sadie's owner and Angus's owner, and learns that there is a whole new world outside their door.

It's very gratifying to see the girls and how proud they are to get that certificate for having their dog placed as a Service Dog.

If the girls are paroled, and have done a good job for me...I will consider letting them do community service with me... and if I have an opening I will be glad to add them to my workforce. I have one girl working for me right now, and doing a great job. She also checks in even when there are no dogs to do, just to let me know what she is doing, and how things are going. It's not easy on the outside when you have had everything provided for on the inside. But she is working for me part-time and has a full time job and doing an excellent job.

I have been told that my lectures are the same given to families, when they become foster parents. I think it gives them a good understanding of what its like to have to care for a child 24/7...training, feeding, grooming, etc. My lectures contain info on learning theory, challenging motivators and more and more.

I look forward to coming to class each day not knowing what I will have happen that day... who's dog learned a new trick, or finally learned to do a command that has taken him 2 weeks to learn. Each new thing is not only a step for the dog, but a big step for each woman that chooses to be in the program, and their recovery. To know that some how and in some way they gave a little back and helped someone or a critter in the process.

I thank Jo Acton for taking the chance, of starting this wonderful program and hope that we will be able to continue...helping people and critters.

- Deb Bouwkamp, Program Director  
Prison Paws for Humanity

# Prison Paws for Humanity

HARMONY COMMUNITY

## INMATE TESTIMONIES

My name is Tonya Maxey. I am 24 years old and I've been locked up for almost three years now, two of those spent here at MWP. I came into the Prison Paws program because I really missed my dog at home and I needed some kind of companionship. In February 2005, I came into a program that only trained service dogs. By March, we were changed into a therapeutic community. My first response to the therapeutic community was "Great, what did I get myself into." But as we progressed and I started serving in our structure board, I began to build self-confidence. I was becoming a leader, learning skills of self perseverance. I've helped train one service dog, Charm, who went to a 14 year old boy who has muscular dystrophy. I've never felt so much pride in anything I've ever done in my life. "Emma" was

another service dog I had the pleasure of training for a while as well. Seeing the dogs prosper and learn and go to good



Charm and Crystal

homes has given me a sense of accomplishment. I've gained so much self-respect and I've learned to ask for help. I have learned that you can't do everything on your own. The officers, Mr. Harmon and Mr. Bromberg have been a big part of my recovery as well. They have so

much confidence in the ladies of Harmony, when we succeed so do they! Their constant encouraging words and faith in our change has kept me going and is a main reason I've continued to move on through the hard times in our therapeutic community. I've learned through mistakes who I am and what I can do. I have faith in myself. Something I couldn't have said a year ago. I've done more the last year here in the community that I could say I'm proud of than the other 23 years of my life. Harmony saved me, the one I had left inside and taught me not to be ashamed of who I am and to make good choices in my life. I now have dreams, goals, and confidence and it's due to what I've learned here in Harmony from everyone around me.

- Tonya Maxey

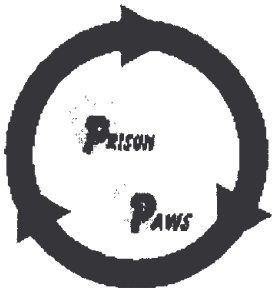
Being part of the Prison Paws program has given me a new sense of direction in life. I have learned to become proactive rather than reactive, all along preparing myself for re-entry into society. By being in the program and therapeutic community, I've learned what it means to problem solve and

cope with everyday life in a healthy and positive way. I feel the time spent in this program has conveyed "Right Living" as well as "Recovery", for my future success in the community. I have accepted responsibility of my poor choices and have endured the pain necessary to achieve life

at its "Highest Standard." I have changed old behaviors in search of a new freedom both within and outside these walls. Having this opportunity to live and work with the dogs, has been an experience I won't soon forget. It has given me a chance to give back to my community in a

positive way, so that when I leave, I will know that I was able to give back to those less fortunate. This program has been life changing to say the least.

- Angela Fulford



*"I know that every choice I make will give me a chance to pave a new path."*  
Heather Harper

Being a part of a therapeutic community has given me many tools, allowing me to change, grow, build confidence, gain independence, be accountable, be responsible, and learn to problem solve. As well as many other attributes essential for healthy living. I came to prison defeated, I had given up. For the first forty-five days, I had only slept and went to meals. I was determined to get through this time of my life by sleeping. It was not until I came out to the Prison Paws program that I began to change. I had a chance to be

responsible and to work hard, which in turn began to build my confidence. Once I began building confidence, the self-respect came. The self-respect required that I become accountable for my past, present, and future. Now, that I have become accountable for my actions, I had to learn to problem solve, since I was not alone in this community. I am accountable for what has become my life. I no longer blame my childhood circumstances. Even though I was programmed to feel unworthy, I now am capable to do the work to change the

program. I am learning to love myself, despite my mistakes. I am able to live without the fear of feeling rejected, looking foolish, or being alone. I am learning to let go of the past, so I can move forward. Allowing my wounds to heal so I do not continue to bleed. I have learned that now everyday brings a new opportunity for growth and all of my life's experiences will make me whole. I know that every choice I make will give me a chance to pave a new path. I believe the key ingredient to the success of this program has been staff. Being treated as a person and not as a criminal, convict, felon, prisoner, etc. has made rehabilitation possible.

- Heather Harper



Sampson turning on the lights.

Since I've come to the dog pod, in ways I've become more assured of myself. I feel I'm learning a lot more, my time is learning instead of stinkin' thinking. It is a structured environment, which also helps me a lot. I also feel I'm being treated like a normal person living in a therapeutic community instead of being in prison. There is also a lot of

positive people. Training dogs is very exciting to me. It's a career that could help me on the outside world in more ways than one. This program has heightened my self-esteem by allowing me to train, live, and work with the dogs, making a better future for myself and others.

- Twila Carey



Sampson



Since joining the Harmony Community, I have gained a sense of purpose and self-worth. Being a part of Prison Paws for Humanity has been an awesome way to give something back to the community as well as learn new skills. The therapeutic aspect of Harmony provides a

safe, structured atmosphere in which we can become aware of, and change our "wrong" thinking and living into "right" thinking and living. I have more confidence and feel better prepared to re-enter society and live a productive life. I love being able to take dogs who some

might consider "throw-aways" and forgotten by society and turn them into valued service dogs and pets. Just like me, they are getting a second chance at life.

- Jennifer Learned

*May you always have faith to believe in yourself...to continue each journey you start, to face each new pathway determined to travel with courage and hope in your heart.*



Cleo using the credit card.

Since coming to the program I have learned patience, life skills, and have been given a second chance as well as the rescued dogs. I feel that this program has given me a chance to give back to my community in a healthy and life altering way. I have learned hands-on dog training techniques as well as dog grooming skills that weren't available to me without this program. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of Prison Paws for Humanity and appreciate all the

hard work that has gone into keeping this program available to the women here at Montana Women's Prison. This program has given me a sense of purpose in my life and my recovery.

- Christine LaFosse

The Prison Paw- Harmony Program has given me the opportunity to change my entire life.

I didn't know who I was when I came to this prison 2 1/2 years ago. As I get ready to walk out the door, I am so grateful for the many programs that I have participated in. I know today that I have the choice to do what is right and to succeed. I believe I will make it as long as I utilize all the tools that I have been given.

Warden Acton and her staff treat each of the women with respect. I just wish I would have had the opportunity to meet them under different circumstances. They've touched my life and I will never forget them. I thank Warden Acton for her vision to create this program. It taught me to believe in myself, to challenge myself and to be responsible. I have empathy for others and hold myself to a higher standard of living.

I learned all of this through living my life by the standards set forth in this community. I plan to continue my life outside committed to those same standards. I've learned a "New" way of living.

- Sonja Kraft

*"It is not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves."*

*Sir Edmund Hillary*



Sonja Kraft with Chauncey

The Prison Paws and the Harmony program have given me a new lease on life. I arrived here at MWP a complete mess. Within a month I was accepted into the dog program. I was so excited to be able to care for a dog as I missed my children very much. We were then asked to try and establish a therapeutic community. I dove

in head first because I never want to return here, I was willing to take as much therapy as I could possibly absorb.

As a community member we not only focus on the dogs but also our own recovery and identifying behaviors that could end us up returning to MWP. I have had the opportunity to make positive changes and for

the first time in years live a lifestyle that I can be proud of. I wouldn't have been able to do this without the encouragement from our staff. I am so grateful that I was given the opportunity to participate in an amazing program.

- Twila Hallford



# "Q" Dogs



Andy  
Private Home



Angus  
Service



A.J.  
Private Home



Al-Tigre (Joy)  
Therapy Dog



Duncan  
Private Owner



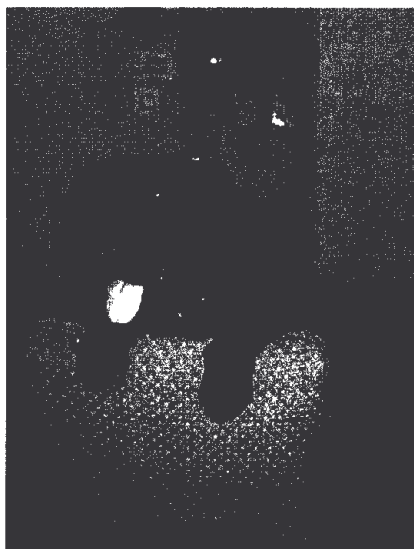
Spanky  
Private Home



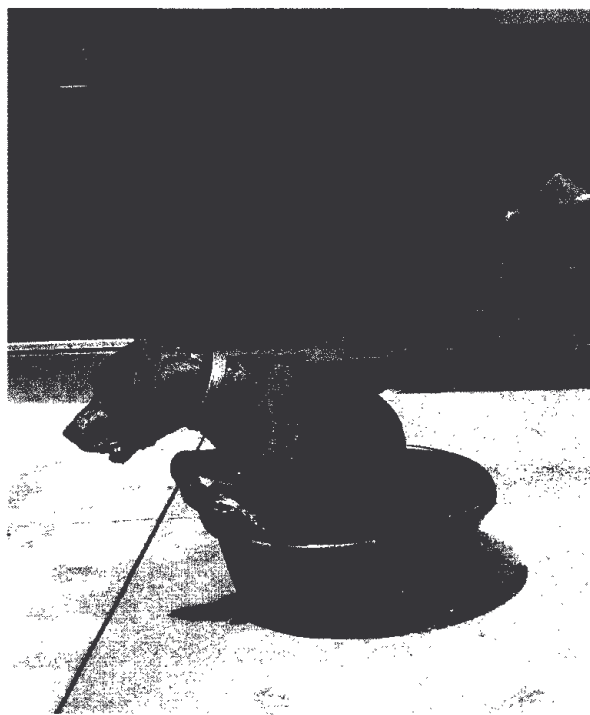
Aspen  
Private Home



Augustus  
Private Home/Therapy



Augustus Greeting Visitors



Angus Cooling off on a hot day



A.J. posing for the camera

# "B" Team



Baxter  
Private Owner



Beauty  
Private Home



Bella  
Private Home



Bentley  
Private Home



Bianca  
Private Home



Bingo  
Private Home



Bliss  
Private Home



Bodhi  
Private Home



Budreaux  
Private Home



Daisy  
Private Owner



Holly  
Private Owner



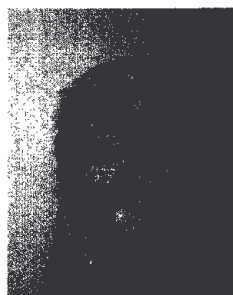
J.D.  
Private Owner



Miss Dottie  
Private Owner



Missy  
Private Owner



Sadie  
Private Owner



Budreaux and  
the up and  
coming super-  
star!!

# "C" Dogs



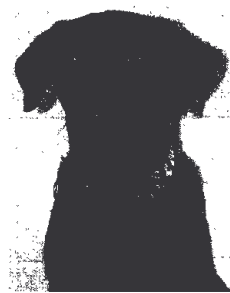
Lucy  
Private Home



Chance  
Private Home



Charley  
Private Home



Charm  
Service



Chauncey  
Drug Detection



China  
Private Home



Cierra  
Private Home



Clarice  
MCE



Cleo  
Service



Crystal  
Private Home



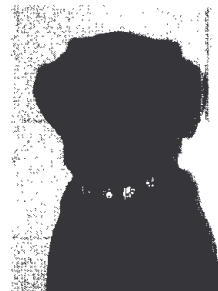
Cubby  
Private Home



Dexter  
Private Owner



Molly  
Private Owner



Gypsy  
Private Home



Lexie  
Private Owner



Max  
Private Owner



Piper  
Private Home



Poncho  
Private Home



Sampson  
Service

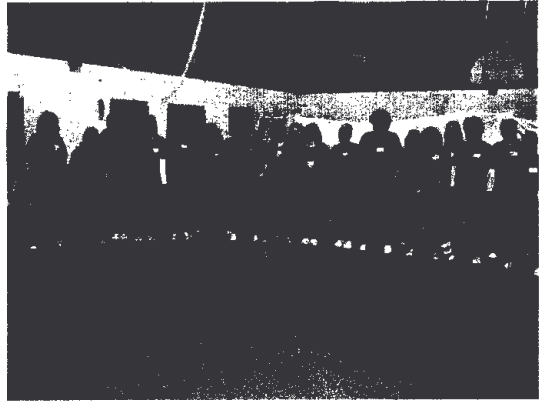


Tiki  
Private Owner

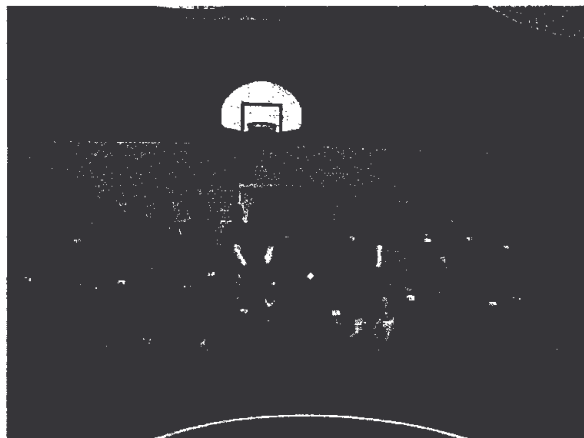
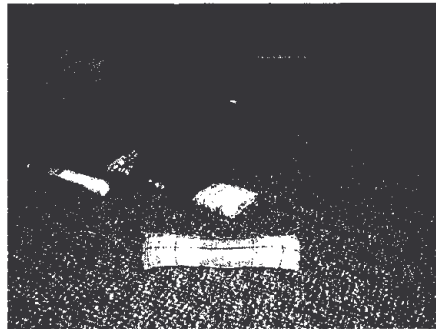
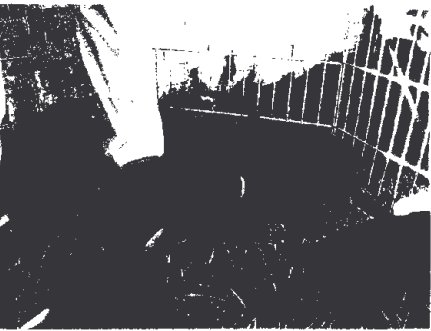


Tilly  
Service

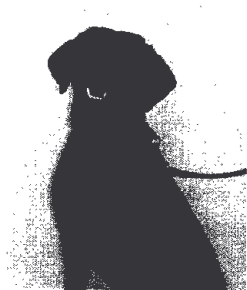




# Photo Gallery



# "D" Dogs



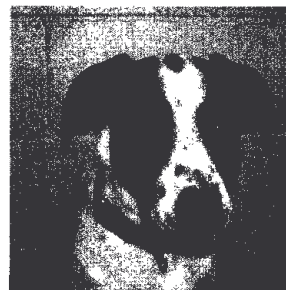
Daisy  
Private Home



Dan  
Private Home



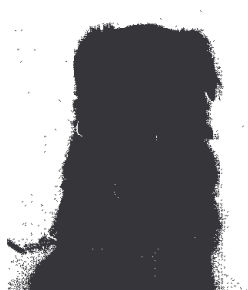
Dash  
Private Home



Dot  
Private Home



Napoleon  
Private Owner



Dutchess  
Private Home



Duncan  
Private Home



Foxy  
Private Owner



Honey  
Private Owner



Deliliah  
Private Home



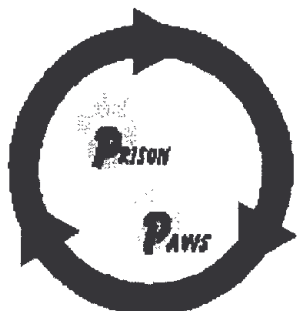
Winny  
Private Home



Cleo  
Private Owner



Poncho taking a break from training

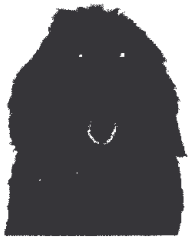


How much is  
that Doggy in  
the window?



Double Trouble!

# "E" Dogs



Eddy  
Private Home



Edie  
In Training



Ehli  
In Training



Einstein  
In Training



Elijah  
Private Home



Eliza  
Private Home



Elliot  
Private Home



Ellie  
Service



Emma  
Service



Ezzy  
Private Home



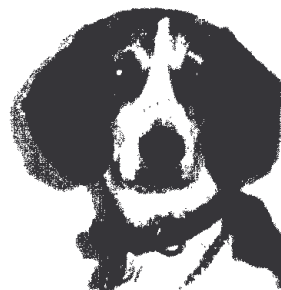
Fender  
Privately Owned



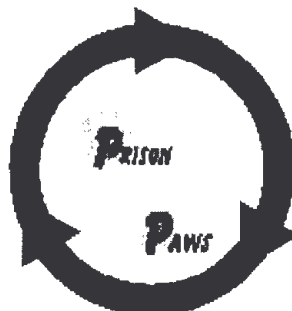
Gibson  
Privately Owned



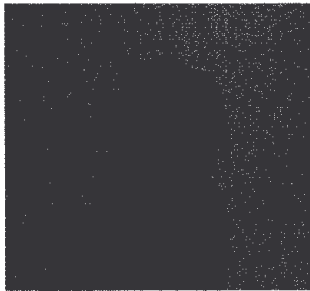
Cisco  
Privately Owned



Wolfy  
Privately Owned



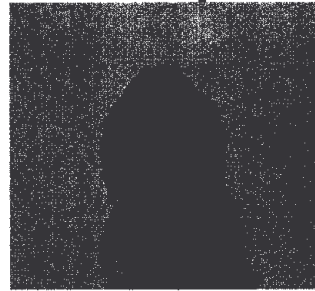
# "F" Dogs



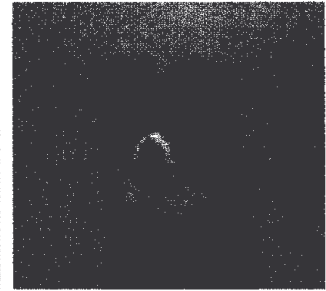
Felix  
In Training



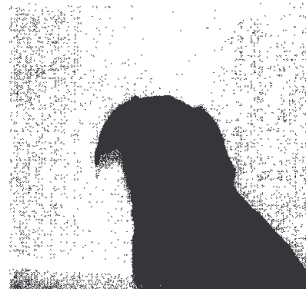
Freddy  
In Training



Fergie  
In Training



Carson  
In Training



Flash  
In Training



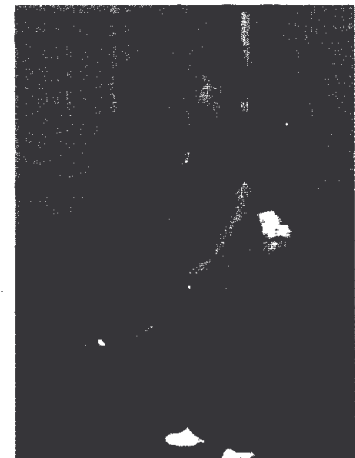
Buddy  
In Training



Carrie Johnson and Felix



Twila Hallford and Chauncey



Angie Fulford and Sharr Schroeder  
In dog class

## THE STORY BEHIND THE "C" PUPPIES

In April of 2004 we had the honor of rescuing 10 puppies and their mother. The puppies were only 3 weeks old when they arrived here at MWP. Their mother Lucy had an infection and was in bad shape and couldn't care for her puppies. We had 4 handlers in one room caring for the puppies. The first weeks they had to be hand fed.

They were so smart. The puppies graduated basic obedience at 4 months old. 5 of them were adopted. The other five were chosen to remain

for service work training. Their names are Crystal, Charm, China, Chauncey and Cleo. Crystal and China were adopted, Cleo and Charm went on to be service dogs, and Chauncey is currently being trained as a drug detection dog for the prison and Probation and Parole.

Cleo and Charm went to work for 2 brothers who are 14 and 16 years old. These dogs have changed the lives of these boys forever. The boys can go outside alone now because these

dogs will ring the doorbell when the boys are ready to come back inside.

Chauncey right now is being trained in Oregon with our officer, Mr. Harman, to detect for drugs in the prison, at visiting, and in the homes of those who are on probation. He is excelling in his training of this new program.

It is a great experience to be apart of this program. This is something that we all are very proud of because it is something positive that we can leave behind.

## INMATE TESTIMONIES

When I first got to the prison, I didn't have any direction, I was scared, alone and very angry. After a few weeks went by, I met another woman that was living on the dog-pod who seemed very focused and seemed to have direction. I really wanted that for myself.

Once I moved out to the dog program, I immediately felt accepted-Like I had found my place to grow and learn. With-

out having human touch within the prison, it was such a privilege and luxury to be able to get up every morning and hug my dog.

What I have learned in the dog program is empathy and responsibility towards other living things in this world. I have small children to care of upon my release and being able to care for, nurture and teach a dog had helped me remain

responsible and accountable. I love the dog program and will never be able to convey in words the things I have learned and the many opportunities I was afforded to change my negative behaviors into positive accountable behaviors. I have learned empathy and compassion to never want to victimize someone again.

- Rochelle Park

I have been very fortunate and blessed to have been a participant in the Prison Paws for Humanity program here at Montana Women's Prison.

I entered the program in May of 2005 and since then I have gained new skills and the confidence to apply myself in a productive way upon may release into society.

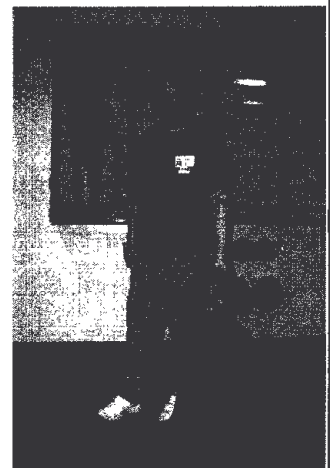
I feel I have been given the opportunity and privilege to give back to society in a proactive way, what I selfishly took. I have grown in so many ways.

I feel that by working with the dogs and learning to be responsible and accountable for my actions and behaviors, I have overcome a destructive criminal way of living.

I cannot express the gratitude I feel to those who made this program possible. It has changed my life and the lives of so many others.

Thank you Prison Paws for Humanity.

- Vicki Cordell



Bobbie Craft and Fergie



I've been here at MWP for 3 years. Presently I'm a member of the Therapeutic Community "Harmony—Prison Paws for Humanity" where I have successfully been trained as a Service Dog handler and Dog Whisperer.

During the last 2 years I have trained Companion, Therapy and Service Dogs. I currently serve as the Dog Whisperer on our Harmony Structure Board. A Dog Whisperer sees to the emotional and physical well being of the dogs as well as assist in the training classes.

The unique program has offered me rehabilitation programs involving modifying behaviors, changing attitudes and improving my interpersonal skills. Not only have I benefited

greatly from these programs, but I believe my proactive involvement and integrity have been a positive influence as well.

I am grateful for the privilege and time I have spent at MWP where I was given the opportunity to work, attend, and complete numerous programs and activities which have all made a purposeful change in my life.

Prison Paws for Humanity has been and is an important part of my recovery. I have been a part of it for 2 years. We have been able to rescue over 80 dogs. Which helps us to give back to my community in a BIG WAY!!

Not only do we help the dogs but the families that adopt our dogs as well.

We have had 6 Service Dogs that were trained in our program. These service dogs have changed these families lives forever. We have also trained 2 therapy dogs.

Upon my release I will continue to work with dogs, so I can continue to give back to my community, because I have seen the difference a service dog or even a companion dog can make in someone's life.

This will be one of the ways I will continue to help pay back for the harm I've caused with my crime. Thanks to Prison Paws for Humanity.

- Bobbie Craft

I am so happy to be a part of this community and to be able to play a part in the process of rescued dogs being trained to help others in such a positive way. It has given me such purpose and self-esteem. Being in this environment has encouraged me to become a better person, but also a team player, which is teaching me how rewarding the effects of being a positive influence in the community can be. Choosing to be accountable for my

actions, being responsible not only for myself but for my future.

The skill of training, grooming and daily care of the dogs I can also take with me. I will always be able to use these in the future. I enjoy the Recovery Relapse Prevention classes we take, Women in Recovery, and Anger Management. They are helping me to understand, refocus and become a better prepared woman so I can make healthier choices, emo-

tionally, and mentality. We also have motivation classes which inspire me. We even have a daily walk time for "Harmony" family. So we are physically healthier too.

I am so proud I am here, this increases my chances to gain the tools, not only never to come back but to become a better person inside. I am truly blessed.

- Kandy Blackwell

I came to this program in the fall of 2005. When I heard of this program I was amazed that anything like it could exist in a women's prison. I was brought out to the program with many expectations. I was given opportunities to train dogs in basic and advanced obedience which I received a certificate in. I touched on some service training and look forward to other opportunities. I'm sure I felt I was helping the

dogs, but in truth they gave me so much more. I learned to live in a therapeutic community. I was a little unsure what this was going to mean. I believe I am learning to live in a healthy family. Not one of us is perfect, but we all have something to bring to the table. We learn to shine and allow others to shine. We celebrate our good moments and hold one another up to those moments we are not so good. We praise and we comfort

in healthy ways. We are a part of something we feel is right. We participate in classes and study groups. We have community meeting where issues are addressed or we just have fun. We say goodbye to those leaving with tears and welcome those into our community with open arms. I believe that anybody this program touches it changes. It has touched me and changed me. I know how to laugh and how to cry. I know how to reach

out and allow others to reach out to me. I can shine where I'm good at and I can learn where I'm not. I have learned to gain love and respect and give it back. I can be anything I set my mind to and plan to start with leaving here ready to love and care for my husband and two sons. I'm even getting a dog.

- Liz Johnson

*"See your goal  
Understand the obstacles  
Clear your mind of doubt  
Create a positive mental  
picture.  
Embrace the challenge  
Stay on track  
Show the World you can  
do it"*

I've only been a part of this program for 1 week and a day. Every day of it has been a blessing, and I'm beginning to address many internal issues.

1. I don't deserve to be here, I am unworthy of a second chance.
  - Fact: I earned my way to this program with good behavior and effort on my part, I'm regaining trust with others and self.
2. I am unloveable and hard even to like.
  - Fact: These dogs, everyone of them, love me unconditionally and I'm getting along well in the program with my family and staff.
3. My depression and lack of motivation make it hard to even face the day and do normal tasks, i.e. "I just can't face it."
  - Fact: By putting the needs of my dog and the program 1st, I am functioning much better.
4. My future is hopeless, I have no skills.
  - Fact: I'm learning many skills in here, some of them marketable in animal care and other social and living tools.
5. I'm an outsider, alone and can't fit in.
  - Fact: It takes teamwork in this program, it's not about me, it's about we and I'm learning that.
6. I've gained weight, I don't look or feel well, I have unhealthy sedentary habits.
  - Fact: I'm much more active, have cut down on snacks due to dog's presence and I'm much more active because of the dogs and there's so much to do.

7. I've been here for 4 months and am past my parole date and haven't begun any programming.

- Fact: From 0-60, I'm in women in Recovery, anger Management, Dog training, a Dog Whisperer in house, still working in the kitchen and soon to be starting CP&R1 and possibly other court and screening programs.

8. It's hard to imagine being in prison for another year to complete programs, and stand a chance at success when I get out.

- Fact: With the needs of the dogs first, the additional structure and everything going on in this program, I don't have time to dwell on negative thoughts, I focus on what's next "today" and everything I do here strengthens my chances of success. This structure and busy schedule is how Life is Lived and Life is for Living.

9. My boyfriend's financial support has leveled off considerably and money's tight.

- Fact: Along with my kitchen job, we have the opportunity to earn a little extra money making lanyards in this program and before this I did not know how to macramé.

10. My Christianity and the time I take for Bible study and church will be frowned upon.

- Fact: If anything, my growth in this area is encouraged and my behavior towards others and self is improving because of that and the love of God's creatures, DOGS!

Well, I guess I hadn't really given much thought to all this program has already done for me, and I know my hopes of what I take home from it are ultimately

much, much more than I could possible list here.

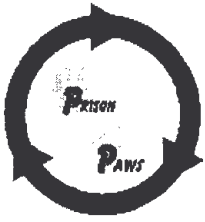
Our dog Felix is such a joy. He was rescued after nearly being beaten to death, he's 9—so he's an old boy—but what a loving dog he is. He would be dead if it weren't for this program. Over 80 animals have been rescued by this program from a death they didn't deserve and many are currently or have gone on to serve people that have limited mobility or other physical limitations. They are just happy in their life of service, they are happy just to be alive. That right there is just one of the many lessons the dogs have taught me.

Gratefulness just to be alive and I expect there's much more these dogs will teach me before it's all said and done.

- Terry Baldwin



Service Dog Training



## HARMONY COMMUNITY

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**Making a difference...One dog at a time!**

Although Montana Correctional enterprises supplied an initial grant to cover start-up costs for the program, the expenses for the dogs are extensive, and are offset by donations and monies earned through an industry program by Harmony Community members at MWP.

If you would like to make a donation or sponsor our program in any way, we would be happy to accept any of the following:

- WALMART GIFT CARDS
- PETSMART GIFT CARDS
- CASH OR MONEY ORDERS

Doggie Care packages are always welcome through Warden Acton.

## OWNER TESTIMONIES

"...It has only been 10 days since I have had Sampson, but he has changed my life and Danielle's for the better.

I did not know it was possible to love a dog as much as we love Sampson. He is my legs and he gives me such joy. He cracks me up with laughter everyday because of his personality. He is such a proud dog....

Thank you so much for giving me the best of all your dogs. He is my every thing!!!..."

- D.R

"Judy has had some set backs but the dog has saved her life in several in-

stances. He won't leave her side. He is a beautiful fantastic dog. He does everything that he is suppose to do and more."

- D.S.

"Thank you...for the precious gift you have given to me. Sadie's vocabulary continues to grow. She is an amazing, intuitive, loving and supportive part of me, helping me to continue to take one step at a time, day by day...

If ever anyone, anywhere wants to hear first hand the abilities and endless possibilities for the beautiful Golden Retrievers and other breeds

that you train, and their "people partners" call on me. I will be here, with my constant companion beside me. We love you!"

- G.F.



Adopted Service Companion